

observation of the bird calling from the large Sugar Gum that rises above the canopy on the crest of the Glynns hill.

The white form of the Grey Goshawk was recorded at Glynns around the summer solstice of 1994 and there is speculation that it may be breeding locally. Would it breed so far from its territory? Would it take up permanent residence? Glynns certainly provides opportunities that make it attractive for the Goshawk to stay. They have been known to fly with flocks of White Cockies, using them as camouflage to take smaller birds who haven't noticed the slightly different bird in the flock. The mix of open grassy areas, regenerating slopes, dry sclerophyll hill country and the riparian forest, river and wetlands generates a wide

variety of prey and habitat. It is these qualities that create biological opportunity and give importance to an area such as Glynns, especially in a regional context, providing refuge in times of environmental stress in other parts of the State.

It is the thrill of seeing the rare white bird finding and using these resources that is a reward for all the planning and work needed to restore the urban wilderness. It is a benchmark of the success of the Park vision to record a rare white bird as part of the fauna.

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## The Wasp and the Spider

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In a garden in Camberwell at midday on 3 April 1995 I was casually observing the web of a Leaf-curling Spider *Phonognatha graeffei*; the web was in good repair. A spider (assumed, and later proved, to be a female) was in the curled leaf at the hub of the web; her legs were visible at the entrance. A European Wasp *Vespula germanica* landed at the hub of the web on the opposite surface from the leaf retreat. After a few moments the wasp left, to return about two minutes later. This time she forced her way through the web and immediately entered the leaf retreat. After about 1.5 minutes she left, to return yet again after another short interval. Now she landed on the same side of the web as the retreat and re-entered it. For the following 2.5 minutes neither spider nor wasp was visible, but the retreat shook and vibrated intermittently. The wasp then re-emerged tail-first, carrying the spider's abdomen, which she dropped (presumably not intentionally) just after leaving the retreat (hence enabling the abdomen to be retrieved and identified).

I then removed the retreat from the web and carefully opened it. Fresh spider remains - part of a cephalothorax and about 15 leg fragments - were contained in the retreat.

This observation shows that European Wasps have developed the capacity to exploit a presumably novel food-source (there are no Leaf-curling Spiders in Europe), utilising a feeding technique which discards all but the nutritionally-rich abdomen of the spider. Clearly neither the spider's web, nor its venom, nor its use of a retreat which is usually regarded as a refuge from predation, offered any effective defence against this exotic predator, even though the cavity within the leaf was so narrow that the wasp obviously did not have room to deploy her sting. Since both wasp and spider are most active in later summer and autumn, and since the spider seems to be so vulnerable to wasp predation, I cannot but feel some concern over the survival prospects of the Leaf-curling Spider in areas supporting dense European Wasp populations.

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